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House of Representatives

The House met at 11 a.m.

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

As we read the words of the Psalms, O God, we are reminded that we can bring to You all our thoughts and our feelings, our hopes and our fears, our joys and sorrows. We are told that we should sing a new song, for You have done marvelous things and also that You will hear the prayers of our hearts and minister to us in our deepest need. Bless, O God, all those who turn to You with thanksgiving and praise for each new day and bless, too, all who seek from You the full measure of forgiveness and peace. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Idaho [Mrs. CHENOWETH]

come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. CHENOWETH led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WITHHOLD MEXICAN GOVERNMENT CERTIFICATION

(Mr. SHAW asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I will make this very simple. Mexico is not a reliable ally in the war on drugs. Continued and pervasive corruption of Mexican law enforcement, including its top antidrug official, make the choice clear. A nation with between \$10 and \$30 billion in annual drug trade, whose law enforcement and government officials are estimated to receive almost half a billion dollars a year in bribes and whose antidrug czar was in the employ of one of Mexico's most wanted drug lords, does not deserve our certification.

Our Nation's young people are at risk. If we want to take a strong stand against drug use, then we must not certify a country with the kind of problems we are seeing in Mexico. We cannot close our eyes to the antics of Mexico's drug lords and the complicity of Mexican government officials just for the trade benefits.

While Mexican President Zedillo's efforts are encouraging, we need to see some real results. The results will not be forthcoming until the President of Mexico can get the support of the rest of the government with him.

Plain and simple: Certification can wait until then.

HEALTH INSURANCE FOR CHILDREN

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, today the House Democratic leader, DICK GEPHARDT, and the Senate Democrat leader, TOM DASCHLE, are sending a letter to Republican leaders GINGRICH and LOTT calling on Republicans to move forward on expanding health care coverage for children. Many Democrats, including the President, have developed proposals to ensure all children have health insurance, but to date Republicans have offered no plan while outright refusing offers from the President and congressional Democrats to incorporate a children-only health insurance program into a bipartisan congressional agenda.

Just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the New York City public advocate, Mark Green, released a report on the growing number of uninsured citizens in New York. Among the report's many disturbing findings was that between 1990 and 1995 the proportion of New York's children who have no medical insurance increased by 6 percent. As of 1995, nearly 20 percent of New York's children, 1 of every 5, did not have health insurance. And an equally troubling finding was that some 22 percent of uninsured citizens, many of which are parents, actually work for companies of more than a thousand people.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the writing is on the wall: Those parents who work for large companies are finding it difficult, as are many, to adequately provide health insurance for their children.

HOSPICE

(Mrs. CHENOWETH asked and was given permission to address the House

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, I just experienced something we all know we will have to experience and do not want to. I just experienced my mother passing away. And you know, it is very interesting that, while this was a tragedy in our personal life, there was a silver lining to this cloud; and that was the discovery of hospice.

While this Nation has concentrated on new life and the beginning of life and the excitement of new life and youth, which is an understandable thing, America as a whole has not concentrated in helping one another with the death process and the grieving process and the process of losing loved ones. Hospice was there to help our family. Hospice proved to be far more support than I had ever dreamed of.

Hospice, in 72 percent of the cases, is a voluntary organization and supported by Americans across this Nation.

TRIBUTE TO TOM ROGERS

(Mr. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I want to take 1 minute to pay tribute to a man who is very much admired and respected and loved in our community. I refer to the 22d District of California.

Tom Rogers is an inspiring leader in the environmental movement. He is an able, compelling legislator; supervisor for Santa Barbara County. He is a human being of incomparable warmth, charm, positive, constructive spirit. He is currently involved in an all-out knock-down struggle with Lou Gehrig's disease.

I know I speak for all the citizens in our district in cheering him on and telling Tom Rogers and his family that he means the whole world to all of us. We thank him profoundly for all that he, his wife Katy, and the family have done for our community, but we also thank him for his high ideals and for the shoes that he gave me, without which I would not have won this seat in Congress.

We want to cheer him on and we ask that God will be his comfort and his strength.

MULTINATIONAL ORGANIZATION TO RULE ON U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICIES

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is inconceivable but true. A multinational organization, headquartered in another country, is about to rule on whether we here in the United States can establish our own immigration policies.

The World Trade Organization has set up a three-person panel which is

hearing the challenge presented by the European Union against our overwhelmingly supported anti-Castro law known as Helms-Burton. That law says that anyone who knowingly trafficks in illegally confiscated property which belongs to a U.S. citizen will not be allowed into our borders. Protection of private properties is not only an American cornerstone, it is also international law. Cuba should be no exception.

The administration must make it quite clear that the United States will not allow any international organization to dictate our foreign policy, and we must assert our willingness to use the national security clause to defend the Helms-Burton law. Anything short of this will compromise our rights as an independent and sovereign Nation. The U.S. Congress writes our laws and not a multinational organization.

EIGHTY PERCENT OF ILLEGAL DRUGS COME FROM MEXICO

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, in America today 80 percent of all heroin comes from Mexico; 80 percent of all cocaine and all marijuana comes from Mexico; 80 percent of all narcotics in your town, in my town comes from Mexico. It is so bad that Mexico's top government drug fighter was busted for helping drug traffickers.

And after all of this, reports now say that the White House is leaning towards certifying Mexico again as a co-operating partner in America's war on drugs.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. I do not know who is sleeping in Lincoln's bedroom, but I think a bigger question to be answered around here and in Mexico is who all is in bed with these Mexican drug dealers? Last I heard it was still Uncle Sam, not Uncle Sucker. Take a look at it and think about it.

TIME FOR THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT IS NOW

(Mr. TAUZIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, it is time for the balanced budget amendment. The time is right. It is our responsibility to present it to the American public. For too long many of my colleagues have sought to protect the pork that has become too heavy a burden for the American people to bear.

The time for scare tactics is over, Mr. Speaker. If opponents of the balanced budget amendment really want to protect the American family and its future, they need to end this constant pattern of false and destructive rhetoric and help us do what is right for the country.

Mr. Speaker, the arguments our opponents are using are simply wrong

and they know they are wrong. The balanced budget amendment will not force cuts in Social Security. In fact, the balanced budget amendment is the only hope to save the program in the long run. Let me say it again: No one intends to cut or to touch Social Security. Mr. Speaker, funding for the collection and analysis of the striped bass, however, may have to get reeled in.

Mr. Speaker, we must all act responsibly for the good of the American people we were sent here to represent.

COMMUNITY PROSECUTION

(Mr. BLAGOJEVICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, this morning President Clinton allocated \$16 million for juvenile drug courts. That is an innovative investment in our fight against crime. I am here today, Mr. Speaker, to talk about another powerful new strategy in crime fighting: Community prosecution.

With my bill to create a \$10 million nationwide pilot program, we can put prosecutors in neighborhoods across the country to devise creative solutions that can attack conditions that breed crime.

For example, in Portland, OR, neighborhood prosecutors organized teams of residents to patrol business districts and areas plagued by car thefts. Car thefts have declined. When Portland's residents feared a burned-out building would become a gang hangout, Portland neighborhood prosecutors made sure the landlords rebuilt. Gangs dispersed.

These successes in Portland indicate that community prosecution is more than just a good idea. It works. We should expand on this Portland model and apply it nationwide.

RECOGNIZING EFFORTS OF THE AID ASSOCIATION FOR LUTHERANS

(Mr. MANZULLO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend the charitable activities of the Aid Association for Lutherans, branch 2543, located in McHenry, IL, in the district I represent.

This organization is well-known for its volunteer efforts to help improve the quality of life in the community. In 1995, AAL received an award from the local county board for recycling 315 tons of paper and 1,000 pounds of aluminum. It also donated \$1,000 to Habitat for Humanity and participated in the construction of one of the homes.

In recognition of its outstanding volunteer service throughout 1995, AAL, branch 2543, received a gold star from its home office, one of several it has earned over time.